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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 540

By Womack

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Representative John T. Bragg upon his receipt of the Community Service Award and for his laudable service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those persons who, through their personal and professional efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, these esteemed individuals have made praiseworthy accomplishments and are a credit to their respective families and communities, and to this state; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Mr. John T. Bragg, who will be presented with the Community Service Award at the second Community Service Awards banquet, which will be hosted by the Murfreesboro Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. on January 29<sup>th</sup> of this year; and

WHEREAS, this significant award was established to recognize essential contributors to the well-being of the African-American communities of Rutherford County; and

WHEREAS, few people have attained the voluminous number of honors and accolades that Representative Bragg has accumulated during his thirty years of impeccable service to the

good people of Tennessee as a member of the State House of Representatives and through his own personal endeavors; and

WHEREAS, a native of Woodbury, the retired businessman received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), where he rendered astute service as the president of the Associated Student Body; and

WHEREAS, he furthered his education at the University of Tennessee and bravely served in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II; and

WHEREAS, as an astute and highly respected state legislator for nearly thirty years, Representative Bragg served with probity on many, if not all, of the major standing, special, study and statutory committees of the House of Representatives, including the Transportation, Fiscal Review, Business Tax Study, Calendar and Rules, and Education Oversight Committees, the Information Systems Council, the Task Force on Children and Youth and the Council on Pensions and Insurance; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bragg enjoyed an estimable tenure as the Chairman of the House Finance, Ways and Means Committee for over 20 years and as the Deputy Speaker of the 93<sup>rd</sup> through 99<sup>th</sup> General Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, during his impressive legislative career, Representative Bragg worked assiduously for legislative independence and fiscal responsibility. His sharp pencil has enabled this state to enjoy one of the highest bond ratings of any state in the nation, and his oversight of the state retirement system has resulted in the system being ranked as the best public pension system in the country; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bragg gained national recognition when President Reagan appointed him to the U. S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR), perhaps after witnessing Mr. Bragg's astute leadership abilities as the Chairman of the Tennessee ACIR; and

WHEREAS, a gifted leader, Mr. Bragg is the past Chairman of the Southern Legislative Conference and the past President of the National Conference of State Legislatures, the NCSL Foundation, the Tennessee Press Association and the Middle Tennessee Easter Seals; and

WHEREAS, Representative Bragg has also given unreservedly of himself to protect this state's most precious natural resource--our children; and

WHEREAS, a staunch advocate for children's safety, Mr. Bragg was the sponsor of and the driving force in passing this nation's first child restraint legislation; and

WHEREAS, throughout his public life, Representative Bragg has strived to assure a bright future for all Tennessee students; he was successful in enriching the academic track in public education by amending Governor Lamar Alexander's "Better Schools" Program legislation to require that benchmarks and goals for achievement be established for grades K-12 and higher education. This productive exercise in accountability was dubbed nationally as "Braggmarks"; and

WHEREAS, he also implemented the Chairs of Excellence program in higher education, which now boasts 70 Chairs of Excellence with endowments of more than \$1,000,000; and

WHEREAS, a civic-minded individual whose benevolent nature knows no bounds, Mr. Bragg has donated his many talents as an honorable member of the American Legion, the Moose Club, and Kappa Alpha, in addition to serving with acumen and alacrity as the President of the Murfreesboro Rotary Club, the Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce, the Sportsman's Club and the Blue Raider Quarterback Club; and

WHEREAS, a true "pillar of the community", Representative Bragg has been the deserving recipient of many coveted awards, including the Tennessee Press Association's Man of the Year Award, and was appropriately named as a Distinguished Alumnus of MTSU and Murfreesboro Lions Club's Citizen of the Year, in addition to having the distinct honor of being inducted into the MTSU Blue Raider Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bragg epitomizes the spirit and commitment that is characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Representative Bragg is most grateful for the love and companionship he shares with his wife, Susan, sons Tommy and David and their families, and stepchildren Betty Teoman, Annalee Gay, David Gay and their families. A dedicated family man, his love and affection for his family has inspired his diligent efforts to provide a better life for the citizens of his community, state and nation; and

WHEREAS, it is rare when a person of Representative John Bragg's stature walks among us; his brilliance shines down upon us as he works assiduously for the betterment of society; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it expedient to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Representative Bragg for his dedication to the state of Tennessee and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby congratulate Representative John T. Bragg upon his receipt of the Community Service Award, salute his meritorious service to the state of Tennessee and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.